

RELIGIOUS INFORMER.

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REMARKS ON THE "POTTER AND THE CLAY."

ROMANS IX. 21.

Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

THE Scripture has been often made a subject of warm debate among the various sects professing Christianity; and is generally adduced by those who hold to the doctrine of fate, to prove that God in the beginning as a Sovereign agent, without respect to virtue or vice, holiness or sin, made one man for salvation, and another for damnation; as the uncontrolled potter maketh, of equal clay, one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor: but this application of the subject, appears to be very foreign from the plain intention of the inspired writer. 1. It is very evident, that the apostle was in this chapter writing concerning nations, and endeavoring to shew, that notwithstanding the Jews as a nation had been formerly considered God's peculiar or covenant people; and by their religious privileges, had been distinguished from all other nations; a way was opened by the gospel, whereby all other nations might enjoy religious privileges as well as the Jews. And in elucidating this interesting subject, he clearly proved, that the promises made unto Abraham, did not necessarily include all his descendants, or natural seed; but that it pointed particularly to Christ, and included none but such as were genuine believers in him. And to silence the murmuring of the Jews, he sheweth God's absolute power in disposing of nations, according as they obey or disobey him. And that God having in Christ fulfilled all his promises to the Jewish nations, he could not be considered unrighteous in bestowing his unmerited mercy on whom he pleased, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. He therefore asks the question, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" And answers it with emphasis, "God forbid." "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." And to the intent that all his brethren might see that their salvation was entirely of grace, He saith; "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." And at the same time, to shew God's supreme prerogative, and absolute power over all his rational creatures, to deal with them, and to bestow upon them his mercies, or, to inflict his righteous judgments, according as they please, or displease him, he therefore mentions Pharaoh, as a monument, or example of divine wrath, who on account of his audacious wickedness, and multiplied crimes against God, was left to hardness of heart, and final impenitency. And notwithstanding he was sufficiently ripe for destruction; it pleased God to raise him up or to

make him stand (as the original seems to signify) that is to uphold him in a corporeal state and in office ; while he might in a public and open manner, according to the demerit of his crimes, pour upon him the storm of his wrath, in a multiplicity of plagues, and finally condemn him, and his wicked subjects, with an overthrow in the red sea. And all this God did that he might shew his power in Pharaoh, and that his own name might be declared throughout all the earth, that is, that others might learn obedience to God by this example. Some persons suppose that the words, "even for this same purpose have I raised the up," &c. ; mean, that God designed him for that purpose when he made him ; and decreed all his conduct from the beginning of the world, but if that had been the case, Pharaoh would only have answered the end of his creation, and could not have had any conscience of sin, and would have been doing the declarative will of God. And allowing that hypothesis, he must needs have been a very happy creature ; for Christ says, Mat. xii. 50. "For whosoever shall do the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, my sister, and mother." "But be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." God rules in the kingdoms of men, and setteth up whom he will, and he requires implicit obedience of all those whom he exalts to power or privileges, and deals with them severally according as they obey or disobey him. The apostle says "therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he harden eth." That is to say, he will have *mercy* on all such as hear his calls and obey his voice and submit to his government. But he will harden all such as reject his calls, refuse his grace, and despise his government. However, we are not to understand that God hardens men's hearts any other way than judicially ; i. e. not by infusing any thing into their hearts, to make them more inflexible ; but by withdrawing his aggrieved spirit, and leaving them in a state of final impenitency. 2, To elucidate this idea, the apostle asks the above metaphorical question, "hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor ?" And then adds, "what if God willing to shew his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction : and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called not of the jews only, but also of the gentiles ? As he saith also in Osee, "I will call them my people, which were not my people, and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there shall they be called, the children of the living God." These sayings, do not appear to accord very well with the notion, that God, without respect to virtue or vice, holiness or sin ; made one man for salvation and another for damnation. The question propounded by the apostle, "hath not the potter power over the clay ?" &c. clearly presupposes, that the potter possesses that power over all the clay he works ; i. e. of the *same lump*, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. But if we admit the supposition, that God made one man for salvation, and another for damnation ; and that part which he at first designed for salvation, must necessarily be saved ; and that part designed for damnation must unavoidably be damned ; we deny that power in God, which we allow in a maker of earthen ware. For it is evident,

that a potter has power over the clay of the *same lump*, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. I would here remark, that I think our opponents misapply this text more for want of an acquaintance with the work of a potter, and for want of a knowledge of the terms he makes use of, than for a want of a good intention. For instance, the potter calls the whole quantity of clay of which he purposes to form his variety, "*the mass*." And that quantity which he selects to form an individual vessel of, he calls a *lump*. Therefore, in order to make the text prove eternal election and reprobation; we must understand something which we do not read; i. e. we must understand *mass* instead of *lump*. And I believe that it is always the case with those who believe that famous system, that in order to make it a consistent theory; they are always obliged to understand some secret *decree*, which was never made known; or, to believe in a *will*, which was never revealed in the holy scriptures. "But to the law, and to the testimony, if they speak not agreeably to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

However, if my candid reader will turn his attention but a moment to the passage to which the apostle refers; and from which he doubtless borrowed the similitude; he will there see the whole matter elucidated and explained by Jehovah himself, and opened to the weakest understanding. See Jer. xviii. from the 1st, to the 10th verse. "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels, and the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel as it seemed good to the potter to make it."

Here the candid reader will observe, that the potter did not take another *lump* of like clay to make the second vessel of, but the *same lump* of which he made the first. "Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying O house of Israel cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them."

What can be plainer than this? The potter had power over the clay of the *same lump* when moulding it into a vessel unto honor; if it marred in his hand, to make it again unto dishonor. So God has power over the nations, and can deal with them just as the potter dealt with the clay. That is, if a nation do evil in God's sight so as to provoke him to wrath, and caused him to pronounce the sentence of destruction against them; if they turn from their evil, and amend their ways and their doings; then he will revoke the sentence; or repent him of the evil that he thought to do unto them. This mode of divine conduct, we have clearly exemplified in the case of Nineveh. The Ninevites, were audaciously wicked, and the magnitude of their crimes was such, that God said he would overthrow their city within forty days; and sent his servant Jonah to denounce the sentence. "Yet forty days and Nineveh

shall be overthrown." The decree was absolute. But when the people of Nineveh believed God, and repented at the preaching of Jonah, and publicly confessed and forsook those crying sins which had provoked God's wrath, and called aloud for his judgments, the cause being removed, the judgments of course were averted. For as soon as the king arose from his throne, and laid aside his robe of royalty, and covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes; in humble contrition before God; and by a decree of himself and his nobles proclaimed a fast, saying, "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing, let them not feed nor drink water; but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God, yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands, who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not." God saw their works that they turned from their evil, and God repented of the evil that he said he would do unto them, and did it not.

The fact is, as soon as they believed God's decree, and repented of their sins and made decree themselves, to abandon those enormities which occasioned the denunciation; there being no occasion of its execution, God's decree of course was revoked, and the city was spared. God is unchangeable in his holy nature and always stands opposed to sin; and with him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; yet, his divine attributes are such, that he invariably changes his way of dealing with us, as any change takes place in us. Hence, he is said to be angry with the wicked every day; and that his wrath abideth on the unbeliever: Yet, he is all love and mercy to the repenting, and returning sinner; and although their sins may be as scarlet and as crimson, he will make them as snow and wool. Yea, he will receive them graciously, and love them freely, and pardon them abundantly for his own namesake. Again, we shall see the same mode of divine dealing exemplified toward the nation of the Jews. If we suffer our minds for a moment, to trace their history, from the time of their coming out of Egypt, to the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour; a period of about 1500 years; we shall see the *lump* frequently changed, from dishonor to honor; and from honor to dishonor, until they become so marred in the hands of the divine potter; that they killed the prophets; and stoned them that were sent unto them; and rejected God's only son, and crucified the Lord of glory, and persecuted his followers. Since that time, they have been altogether as a nation, a vessel under dishonor. For their celebrated capital has long since been destroyed—Their magnificent temple demolished—Their grand national council dissolved—and the sceptre has departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet. And for a period of above seventeen centuries, they have been scattered among all nations; and reduced to the most abject and degraded circumstances, not even allowed to hold any real estate in any part of the world, as other citizens, (except in the United States,) which is a striking proof, that the Divine Being, has determined to allow them no land for quiet and permanent possession; but that which he gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, by a sacred oath. And I have no doubt, but as soon as they were convinced of their capital error; and believe in the true Messiah, who has already come; and as a nation adopt the New Testament, as their rule of faith and practice; they will again be restored to their native land; and enjoy religious privileges.

which will be seven fold greater, than ever their ancestors enjoyed at any period under the law dispensation. The apostle has illustrated this subject, in a most beautiful manner, Rom. xi, 20, and 23. "Because of unbelief they were broken off." If they abide not still in unbelief, they shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again." So we see that they are still in God's hand as clay in the hand of the potter, and probably now on the wheel, and as soon as they come into the condition of the promise, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ; God is able, willing, and ready, to mould them into a vessel unto honor; and raise them to the most dignified station: not only in a national point of view; but as a sample to all other believers. For the mountain of the Lord's house shall then be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." In order therefore, for the commencement and ushering in of that glorious day, two things only seem to be necessary. 1. For the Jews as a people to read and believe their own scriptures; and compare the promises made to the patriarchs, and the predictions of the prophets, with the events which have taken place. And 2. For all true believers, to lay aside all the doctrines and disciplines invented by men, and not contained or enjoined in the sacred volume; and take the Holy scriptures as their only rule of faith and practice, and deal with each other as they direct. And for the ministers of Christ of all denominations to consider the Bible their only body of Divinity, and the Holy spirit by which it was written, its best expositer; and compare scripture with scripture; and endeavor as much as possible, to acquaint themselves with the circumstances which existed among the Jews, and other nations, at the times those scriptures were written; and take Christ as their pattern; and the apostles as their learned guides, and strive to imitate him and them in preaching; and instead of holding up the systems and doctrines of men, preach the doctrine that Christ and the apostles preached; that is to say, repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And hold up the necessity of a crossbearing life; and practice the ordinances of the gospel as they are set down in the New-Testament: In this way, all the true watchmen among the gentiles, would soon come in the unity of the faith, and see eye to eye; and in this united situation, they would not only be unspeakably happy among themselves; but would bear a most powerful witness to the Jews, of the reality of the Christian religion. And without doubt, the long wished for day, would then commence, and Jesus would reign from land to land, from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. Two events, which have already taken place, would be sufficient to convince all the Jews, (if they would be candid, and believe their own records) that the true Messiah has come, and that they have overlooked him, namely, 1. The abolition of their national government, and 2. The utter destruction of their temple. For Jacob expressly says Gen. xlix. 10. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." And the prophet Haggai, when speaking of the exceeding glory of the second temple, which was built by Zerubbabel; said, "and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory." Hence it is clear, that those events were not to take place till after his coming; and as it is evident that they have taken place, the Jews must of necessity believe that the true Mes-

Man has come, and that they have overlooked him. Or else, they must acknowledge, that their own scriptures are false and good for nothing. The latter, I suppose they would not be willing to own; and if they admit the former; they may as well admit, that Jesus of Nazareth was the person; for it is certain, that he was the most extraordinary person that history can furnish us with an account of. He was fairer than any of the sons of men; and in grace he excelled them all—He was meeker than Moses—More patient than Job—Stronger than Sampson—Greater than Jonas—Mightier than David—Wiser than Solomon—And made and baptized more disciples than John—And wrought more miracles while he was here upon earth, in about three years, than all the men who ever lived before or since that period. And when the Jews, as a nation, shall believe his gospel, and receive him as their prophet, priest, and king; the first fruit being holy, the *lump* will also be holy; and they shall again become a vessel unto honor. Therefore, from the remarks which have been offered on the potter and clay; we may infer; that as God is the great creator, redeemer, and preserver of all mankind, he governs them all by special laws, both as nations and individuals, and having made them all moral agents; considers them all responsible to himself, for all their thoughts, words, and actions; and affords them all a day and means of grace; and so long as their day of grace lasts, they are in his hand as clay in the hand of the potter; and that he being a just God and a Saviour, has an absolute right to bestow upon them his unmerited mercies; or to inflict his righteous judgments. according as they obey or disobey him. Hence it becomes the indispensable duty of all mankind, to hearken to his gracious calls, repent of their sins, and believe in his son Jesus Christ, and submit to his righteous government, while he is on his mercy seat. Or else they must expect to lie down in sorrow, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power, or in other words they will have to go away into everlasting punishment; while those who believe in Jesus, and receive him as their righteousness, will go into life eternal; and inherit the kingdom prepared for such from the foundation of the world.

O reader, I beseech thee, as an ambassador for Christ and a sincere friend to thy soul, to be reconciled to God; for “now is the accepted time, and behold now is the day of salvation.” The glorious work of reformation is going on in different parts of the Globe; and thousands are rallying round the standard of gospel liberty, and taking shelter under the balmy wings of the Saviour. Hundreds in this country, are flying like clouds before a storm, and as doves to their windows. And all who come with broken hearts, and contrite spirits, are received graciously, loved freely, and pardoned abundantly. None are sent away without a blessing. Trust not to any elections out of Christ I charge you, for all the promises are in him, yea and in him amen. The market of grace is now open—all things are now ready—“and the spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

“Free grace, the christians all declare,
And Christ declares the same:
Free grace! Free grace! and you may share,
Fly, sinners, to the Lamb.”

IMPORTANT QUESTION.

Which are the best means to be used to obtain a revival, when both the minister and the church are in a lukewarm and scattered state?

Ans. 1. Let the minister faithfully examine himself, and remember from whence he is fallen, and repent and do his first work—Let him leave his bed of sloth; and in his meditation repair a second time to the midst of the valley of dry bones; and take another general survey of the deplorable situation of his perishing fellow mortals—Let him solemnly call to mind the awful charge he once there received, “son of man prophesy upon these dry bones.” And let him also recollect the solemn charge he received with the laying on of hands, to “preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season.” And let him solemnly ask himself the question, *Am I as much engaged now for the glory of God, and good of souls, as I was when I first entered the public ministry?* And if I were now called, should I be able to give an account of my stewardship? and then let him proceed as God shall direct.

2. Let all the brethren examine themselves whether they are really in the faith, and whether they keep so close a walk with God, as they did in the days of their espousals. And whether they walk in Christ as they received him &c. Yea, let them repair again to their closets, and cry mightily to God to pour out his spirit unto them, and make known his words to them, and let them daily rise early in the morning and call their little families around them, and read a portion of scripture, sing a hymn, and pray to God as they used to do when they first espoused the cause of religion; and carefully do whatever God has commanded, and avoid whatever he has forbidden; and in this way, there is no doubt, but the work will soon revive, and Zion will travail and bring forth her children.

Religious Intelligence.

For the Informer.

It will doubtless be remembered that by a letter written by Br. David Marks, which was published in the November number of the Informer, mention was made of an Elder in Middletown, Ct. by the name of Josiah Graves. I have had the pleasure of receiving a letter from Elder Graves since, and the following is an extract.

Editor.

Middletown. Dec. 28th, 1822.

Dear Brother in the best of bonds,

I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, although it is not probable I shall ever have the pleasure of seeing you, until I hail you on the shores of the New Jerusalem.

While I was young, my father commenced preaching among the old fashioned separates, or New Lights; but it fell to my lot to differ in opinion from him. I joined the strict communion Baptist church, here I tried in my feeble manner to preach the gospel for about 16 years. I was permitted to preach in Presbyterian meeting houses as well as Methodist, and Episcopalian, besides all this, I was received by the strict communion Baptist churches within the circle of my acquaintance. I do not recollect that I had ever heard the name of a Free will Baptist mentioned, until I had been bearing down against what is termed unconditional election and reprobation, after which a certain lady from Boston said, "Sir, you are a Free will Baptist." Said I, I never saw one. "Well," said she, "You preach like them." Now, sir, I believe that I never saw a Free will Baptist, or read any of their writings, until a little number of about 12 persons put our lives in our hands, and came out in 1821, and constituted the first Free will Baptist church in Connecticut. We have had some additions, and the summer past, I have baptized four in the society where I live, and I think I can say, that as a church, we live together in love and peace, and we believe that the God of love and peace dwells with us. But we are in an enemy's land, and a hostile country. The opposition that we meet with from different sects, I would fain conceal at this time, for were I to write my feelings, and what I have passed through, it would swell this little scroll to a large octavo volume.

Dear Brother, remember me.

Farewell,

Josiah Graves.

For the Informer.

**Copy of a letter from Elder Timothy Morse, dated Pawtucket,
R. I. January 20th, 1823.**

Beloved Br. Chase,

Nothing has appeared in your valuable publication from me, for some time, and I would still forbear to write, were it not for an impression, I think, of duty.

The goodness of God to me for a year past, much affects my

soul. After labouring through the season past at Windsor, Vt. and gathering a church of more than 50 members, where Free-will Baptist people had not before been known, our brethren consented to give them a Quarterly Meeting last fall, and I could never since feel free, without noticing, in the Informer, some of the effects of that blessed Meeting. As we were a new people to them, every eye was upon us, and, of course they heard with care the leading preachers, and they were so satisfied, particularly with the preaching of Elder H. D. Buzzell, also of the correct order by which all the business of the meeting was transacted, that I think the impression will be very lasting and be to the *Glory of God.*

But I must tell you more of the goodness of God still.

I returned from the above named Qr. Meeting, and tarried with my family four days, then took the stage, and went to Rhode-Island, and arrived at Pawtucket the first of November last, where I have been labouring until now, but hope to be released to go and see my family in three or four weeks.

When I came here, I found the church that had consisted of near 90 members, divided in two parts; each part having an Ordained Elder. Elder Green had with him about 20, and Elder Ray Potter between sixty and seventy. Elder Green occupied the Meeting-house, and retained his union and standing with the Qr. Meeting. I took my stand with Elder Green, and preached about every sabbath in the Meeting-house since, and two thirds of the evenings through each week. I forbear to name here, the trials that we have had, but other communications, which you may have, may in part explain the matter.

Since I came here, the tumult has come to a close; our meetings are more full: brotherly love is much increasing among those, who love truth. Four have been converted, and I baptized them, a number more are seeking the Lord, and things being now set in order, we have a glorious prospect of the work of God to prosper in this place. I must say the prospect of the increase of the kingdom of Christ in R. I. is now the greatest that it ever has been.

Your Brother in Christian Fellowship,

Timothy Morse,

Bristol, Jan. 6. 1823.

MR. BADGER—Our covenant-keeping God, has again vouchsafed us a visit—and at a time when our sky seemed overcast, and our prospects gloomy.

Religion had been very low in the different churches in this place; and although some cried to God for help, and were distressed in beholding the too careless indifference of professors in general; yet they were hardly able to hope for a revival, under the circumstances which then existed. But God has a sovereign right to choose his *instruments*, the *time* and *order* of carrying on his work.

Br. J. N. Maffitt made us a visit the latter part of Nov. and tarried near three weeks. His labors were owned of the Lord, and sinners began to cry “what shall we do to be saved?”

The work of God has always been considered *foolishness* by the unbelieving world, and gainsayers have delighted in bringing up the old objection, “none are affected but silly women and children.” Admitting this objection in all its force, what does it prove? Why, that God works just as He promised, in Jeremiah 31. 34—Hebrews, 8. 11, from the *least* of them to the greatest of them.” Not as some would have it, from the greatest to the least. The Lord has fixed his standard—Matthew 18. 3.—“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.” The objectors prove this—they do not like this coming down from their pride and self conceit, and to plead for mercy in the depths of self abasement, as little children, who have nothing to bring to recommend them to the mercy of God. This, appears to be the cause why thousands perish—they do not like to renounce self and enter the vale of humility. Blessed be God many stout-hearted and rebellious sinners, have felt the arrows of truth to pierce their inmost soul—they have been led to cry for mercy, and were not ashamed to come forward in the face of the congregation, and request the prayers of the people of God. What a scene! There were those who had determined they would not to be frightened, and calculated on good courage in their own way.—Now they are all in tears, sighing and groaning for deliverance. Jesus sees the trembling penitent, and is moved with compassion—speaks the

word of mercy, and all is calm. The thunders of Sinai are hushed in sweet silence; groans are turned into songs of praise for healing mercy—while victory turns on the side of Zion.

Such has been the mercy of God towards us—still the work is spreading. It appeared last week to be increasing.—The converts are now mostly males—the Altar is generally surrounded, on their being invited forward. And I do assure you, my Brother, we do most ardently pray to be fully baptized into the work, and that it may spread both among professors and non-professors, until the whole town shall be filled with the Glory of the Lord.

We calculate, in the judgment of charity, that about fifty have obtained pardoning mercy, since the work began. And a number of lukewarm professors have been very much revived. Nineteen persons have joined society, and a number more are expected to join soon,

I am yours, &c

A. KENT.

Miscellaneous.

FROM ZION'S HERALD.
CHURCH YARD.

I have often experienced a melancholly kind of pleasure in wandering among the tombs of a neighboring Church Yard in the mild twilight of a Summer evening—thither I could repair from the tumults of the city and indulge in contemplations which the busy duties of the day forbade me to enjoy:—In that lonely spot, there is a peace and quietness:—the vanities and frivolities of the world are there no longer seen; the loud voice of authority and pride is unheard, and ambition and crime find there no field for oppression.

To the contemplative mind how many lessons of wisdom may be derived by setting apart an hour each day to spend in such reflections as must needs arise at the sight of that lonely spot whither we all continually tend and at which, in a few short years, every one must arrive. There is no truth more certain than that death must happen to all—and yet how few are there on whom this conviction has any influence sufficient to awaken their minds to reflection and induce them to attempt the cultivation of those virtues God

Has given them, or eradicate the vices of long and habitual indulgence.

Familiarity with scenes of death has served to render the mind callous to its admonitions, or if they be ever moved by a sight of such daily occurrence, the impression is erased by the next object which attracts their attention, and futurity is shut out from their thoughts, they cease to look on death with terror while they imagine themselves secure from its power; it neither awakens them to reflection nor stops them in the career of folly and pleasure; each one flatters himself that the day appointed for *his* departure is at a remote distance and though he may feel the necessity of some improvement in his conduct and be sensible that his conscience would be ill at ease were his last hour to approach *now*, he constantly defers the hour of amendment to some distant period, and doubts not but he shall still have time enough to repent of all defection from duty, and make suitable atonement for past transgressions.

Why should men thus put off to a future day reflections which would so operate to the enhancement of their present enjoyments? What can be the satisfaction, the peace and happiness of him, who spends his days in riotous pleasures, and in the pursuit merely of sensual enjoyments, compared with the security, the dignity of soul—the refined, elevated sentiments of that man whose vision, uncircumscribed by the narrow limits of fleeting life, looks into the regions of futurity, and endeavors to prepare for that solemn hour which he knows must one day come: that hour when the voice of adulation shall no longer pour its increase on his mind—when the gaieties of this vain world shall sink before him into their original nothingness, and his soul find consolation only in the hopes of a blessed immortality.

What a blow to the pride and vanity of man is the reflection that death must put a period to all the dignities and honors of life—all its wealth and pleasures:—that in a few short years he will be summoned by a voice no earthly power can withstand to quit his darling treasures—his fondest schemes of ambition—his honors—titles—friends, and yield himself up to the cold embraces of the tomb?—Who can gaze without emotion on the dungeons of the dead—contemplate the ruins of pride and ambition—the mouldering relics of youth, beauty and genius?—who can pass unmov-

ed the lowly bed where lie the ashes of the great and good—the spot where rests all that is mortal of those whom the world has honored with its loudest plaudits as the benefactors of their race, or execrated as the destroyers and enemies of mankind?—Where is the roseate hue that bloomed upon the cheek of youthful loveliness? where the bright flashes of that eye whose glance diffused happiness and light on all around?—where the stern features of relentless tyranny exulting in savage barbarity over the ruins of its innocent victim? Alas! the proud distinctions of the world are unknown in those gloomy cells and the poor despised outcasts of society are on a level there with the lordliest of their race.

It is not possible that reflections such as these, rendered habitual by frequent meditation, should be without a salutary influence on the mind and heart:—and he who will but discipline his thoughts to such an observance of the nature of his being, will not fail to derive a heartfelt satisfaction from the contemplation which will amply compensate for the abandonment of pleasures, which every year he is losing the capacity to enjoy.

'There are times when the mind seems ready to expire beneath the weight of sorrows which oppress it;—when the gay visions of hope and the buoyant, elastic cheerfulness of the heart are forced to give way to the gloomy shades of melancholy, and the dull, heavy, deadening sense of wretchedness and despair;—these are times when even the soul moving accents of friendship and sympathy lose their accustomed charm;—every avenue to joy seems closed, and while the eyes wander vainly over the expanse of life and not a star of hope seems twinkling in the gloomy void; at such a time—where can the mind look for one ray of comfort—where can the desponding spirit turn with a hope for relief?—the tinsel joy of a vain world can charm no more—and the soul finds rest only in the arms of that Religion—whose precepts are divine, whose promises never can deceive.

PHILEMON.

From the French of Massillon.

THE WORLD.

WHAT is the world even to those who love it, who are

intoxicated with its pleasures and who cannot live without it? The World! it is a perpetual servitude where no one lives for himself alone, and where if we strive to be happy we must kiss its fetters and love its bondage. The World it is a daily revolution of events, which create in succession in the minds of its partizans the most violent passions, bitter hatreds, odious perplexities, devouring jealousies, and grievous chagrins. The World! it is a place of malediction where pleasures themselves carry with them their troubles and afflictions; in the world there is nothing lasting; nor fortunes the most affluent—nor friendship the most sincere—nor characters the most exalted—nor favors the most enviable. Men pass all their lives in agitations, projects and schemes; always eager and active to profit by the retirement, disgrace or death of their competitors; always occupied with their fears or their hopes; always discontented with the present and anxious about the future; never tranquil, doing every thing for repose, and moving still farther from it. Vanity, ambition, vengeance, luxury, avarice—these are the virtues which the world shows and esteems. In the world, integrity passes for simplicity, duplicity and dissimulation are meritorious. Interest the most vile, arms brother against brother, friend against friend—and breaks all the ties of blood and friendship; and it is this base motive which produces hatred and our attachments. The wants and misfortunes of a neighbor add only indifference and insensibility, when we neglect him without loss, or cannot be recompensed for our assistance. If we could look into two different parts of the world—if we could enter into the secret detail of anxieties and inquietudes—if we could pierce the outward appearance which offers to our eyes only joy, pleasure, pomp and magnificence; how different should we find it from what it appears! We should see it destitute of happiness—the father at variance with his child—the husband with his wife—and the antipathies, the jealousies, the murmurs, and the eternal dissension of families. We should see friendship broken by suspicions, by interests, by caprices; unions the most endearing dissolved by inconstancies; relations the most tender destroyed by hatred and perfidy; fortunes the most affluent producing more vexation than happiness; places the most honorable not giving satisfaction, but creating desires for higher

advancement—each one complaining of his lot, and the most elevated not the most happy. ib.

DEA: WM. TRUE.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN HERALD.

AS nothing gives, a greater evidence of the reality of religion, than the pious lives and triumphant deaths of those that have been eminently pious, I think that a short biographical sketch of the life and death of Deacon William True of this town will not be unacceptable to your readers; therefore, I send you the following for publication.

Deacon True was born in Salisbury, Mass. April 15, A. D. 1762, in the days of his youth he had many solemn calls from the Lord to repent and turn to him, but he neglected these invitations and put off the things that concerned his peace for many years, till it pleased the Lord to visit him again in mercy by his spirit. In 1802 he was in the greatest distress of mind for some time, viewing himself a poor lost undone sinner, but he cried to the Lord in his distress and the Lord heard him and delivered his soul, and gave him great peace of mind; and he had such a view of the fulness in Christ that he could and did say to others, Oh taste and see that the Lord is good, and invited all to come to him and be saved. Soon after this he was baptized and united with those that are called Freewill Baptists, and soon after was chosen a deacon of the church, and was found faithful, and received the approbation of the Lord and his brethren; he had many trials to pass through but the Lord supported him in them all, so that he found that tribulation worketh patience, &c.

In the year 1818 he had a very severe trial in the loss of his son Elder Wm. True that had been preaching the Gospel in the State of N. York, and returned to his father, sick with a consumption, who after languishing a few months joyfully fell asleep in Jesus. This was very distressing to his fond parents, but they could say with Job, the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away and blessed is the name of the Lord. After this he was called to part with three daughters and his only surviving son, before he died. Thus in about three years he was called to mourn over the graves of five of his children; but he had the consolation to hear them all say they were willing to go, and departed with joy; although these things were very trying, yet God gave him great resignation to his will, and he would say they are gone but little before me, I shall soon join them in a better world; for some time he had been very much out of health, but kept about, till last February when it was apparent that he was fast going with the same disorder that all his children had gone with, that is the consumption; but the Lord gave him great peace in his mind. And he often told me that he had not had a dark cloud come over his mind, and said it was his last sickness. He continued in this happy frame of mind till he died. For some weeks before his death his joy increased, and he would praise God that he had got so near heaven. A short time before he died I observed to him that when I saw people in his condition I almost wished to be in their case, he looked upon me with a smile, and said, oh sir, if you was in my situation, you would not exchange it for any body's in the world, for I would not, for I have got almost home, and soon I shall be with

Christ which is far better than to be here."

He would exhort all to come to Christ, and tell them how good he found religion to be, on a sick bed. He appeared to enjoy much of heaven, so that he said he had no pain, but life was running out like a taper. For some weeks before his death, his son-in-law, Elder Elijah Shaw, was with him, and he observed that he learned more of the value of religion by hearing his father True talk on his dying bed, than he ever did in the same time before. And although nature failed, his soul was happy, till on the 11th of August, 1822, he fell asleep in Jesus, without a sigh or groan, leaving his kind companion and a number of affectionate children, and a numerous company of friends and brethren to mourn his loss. The next day his funeral was attended by a large concourse of people, to whom Elder Shaw, by the request of the deceased, delivered a solemn and weighty discourse, from Rev. xiv. 13. After which, Elder P. Young delivered a solemn address to the mourners, and weeping congregation. The body was then committed to the grave, there to rest till Christ shall bid it rise. Although the trial is great to his disconsolate widow, yet she finds the Lord to be her supporter and friend, and does not mourn as those that mourn without hope. For if we believe that Jesus rose, even so them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. O, may we all so live, that like this servant of the Lord, we may finish our course with joy.

CEPHAS.

Andover, Nov. 1822.

A letter is received enclosing five dollars, written as follows.

"**BR. CHASE**,—I here send you five dollars, which you will put to my credit.
Yours, &c. JOSIAH FARWELL."

I cannot find any charge to Josiah Farwell, neither do I know where he resides, but suppose he resides in the State of Maine, by the mailing of his letter, and the money probably to pay for the Informer sent to some persons in that country. I wish when Br. Farwell reads this, he would inform me for whom he wishes to pay, and where they reside, and I will give credit accordingly. I hope every person will be particular when they send money, to direct how the money is to be credited, and mention the town and state where the persons reside, who receive the papers.

E. CHASE.

AN UNWORTHY PREACHER.

We are sorry to be under the necessity to state, that some, who profess to be ambassadors of Christ, are unworthy of that title; but duty constrains us to say, that Moses Manrow a youth of about 16 years, formerly a member of the church of Christian brethren at Brutus, N. Y. has conducted in so unbecoming a manner, that he has been rejected from that church, and as he is now travelling and preaching among the Freewill Baptist brethren, we are requested by Elder Elijah Shaw of Brutus, N. Y. to thus publicly declare, that his conduct is such, that he ought not to be received as a preacher of the gospel nor as a christian brother.

TERMS OF THE INFORMER.—For one paper a year 60 cents. For five, \$2.50 cents. For sixteen, \$7.20 cents. If paid in advance, 50 cents a year for one paper. For five, two dollars. For sixteen, 6 dollars.